

Action Plan for Moving Forward with and Improving Stakeholder Processes

Background

With the passage of the MHSA, state and local counties began comprehensive planning processes initiated by the public mental health system in order to transform the mental health system into one in which a broad range of stakeholders are key partners in all aspects of the service system, including policy and planning, service implementation and evaluation. The first effort was the state planning process for the Community Services and Supports (CSS) component of the MHSA. This was followed by local planning processes as counties developed their CSS plans, and subsequently state and local processes have and are occurring for other components of the MHSA including Workforce Education and Training (WET) and Prevention, Education and Early Intervention (PEI). While many of these efforts have been unprecedented in size and scope and successful in some aspects, improvement is needed to insure that these processes are truly inclusive of all stakeholder voices, especially consumers and family members, including consumers, family members and their representatives from underserved communities, such as ethnically diverse, poor, uninsured and geographically isolated communities. With this in mind, a meeting was held on November 28th with a small workgroup to talk about how to get more inclusive input in order to begin to clarify and enhance stakeholder and public involvement in MHSA issues. The end result of the meeting was a decision to organize an effort to convene a workgroup to engage in a dialogue that would result in a draft discussion document about improving stakeholder processes. At the November meeting it was recognized that we would need to consider ways to insure that this dialogue would include the voices of those we have not heard in the past as well as the thoughts and ideas of key stakeholders who have participated in previous MHSA planning processes. Based upon the input at that meeting and subsequent conversations with the Mental Health Association in California (MHAC) and the UC Davis Center for Reducing Health Disparities (CRHD), we are proposing that we undertake multiple efforts for moving forward with improving the stakeholder process.

Suggested Actions:

- A. Ask the CRHD, as they return to the key informants and cultural brokers that they connected with in their recent “Building Partnerships” project, to ask certain key questions about improving stakeholder processes and document all responses.
 - a. Did you think the stakeholder process for developing the state guidelines for PEI was effective?
 - b. If not why not?
 - c. What two things would you suggest to improve the process?
- B. Work through Rachel Guerrero (DMH) and Stacie Hiramoto (MHAC), to invite a small group of key informants and cultural brokers to attend a

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stakeholder process improvement dialogue where they can hear more about the previous stakeholders processes and discuss what they and their communities need in order to participate meaningfully and openly in a workgroup to design a discussion document about future stakeholder processes.

- C. Following A. and B. above, convene a larger workgroup comprised of those who attended the stakeholder process improvement dialogue, other consumers and family members, and key community and government partners to draft a discussion document about improving future planning processes. Prior to convening this group, invitees would be asked to:
 - a. Identify and provide DMH with any written information they have about prior stakeholder process, both state and local, so that DMH could distribute this information to all invitees for review prior to the meeting. This should include both state and local CSS, WET and PEI processes.
 - b. Review the DMH *Mental Health Services Act Implementation Study: Community Services and Supports State Planning Process* report
 - c. Review the planning section of the DMH *Mental Health Services Act Implementation Study: Planning and Early Implementation of Community Services and Supports in Seven Counties*
 - d. Review the material Dr. Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola has gathered from key informants and cultural brokers involved in the “Building Partnerships” project
 - e. Review the input of those who attended the stakeholder process improvement dialogue
 - f. Talk with the groups they represent and/or interface with and bring to the group their ideas for improving stakeholder planning processes.

Subject to modification based upon what is learned in the stakeholder process improvement dialogue, the suggested agenda for the larger workgroup meeting would be similar to the agendas for past workgroup meetings on FSPs and the Integrated Plan. As an example:

- 1. Welcome and introductions
- 2. Discussion about the purpose of and goals for the meeting
- 3. Contextual discussion
 - a. What the law says about stakeholder processes
 - b. Discussion of evaluative material about previous MHSA stakeholder processes
 - c. Participants views of the strengths and weaknesses of prior processes
- 4. Discussion of key questions about future stakeholders processes
 - a. What key principles and values should guide how MHSA stakeholder processes are structured?
 - b. What are the roles and responsibilities of different partners in the stakeholder process (Consumers and Family Members, DMH,

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OAC, Government Partners, Community Partners, Cultural Brokers)?

- c. What kinds of strategies should be used to maximize participation in stakeholder processes, particular participation from consumers, family members, including consumers and family members from underserved and diverse communities and/or their representatives?
- d. How do we monitor stakeholder processes to evaluate whether they embody key principles and values and are accomplishing what stakeholders want?
- e. How do we balance inclusive and comprehensive input into planning, implementation and evaluation of MHSA activities with the need to move forward with timely decision making and funding of services and activities?

5. Next Steps

- D. Following this meeting the consultants will draft an initial summary document of the meeting and send it to workgroup participants for feedback. Subsequently, they will draft a discussion document for DMH.
- E. DMH will publicize this draft discussion document for input in a variety of ways, reflecting what we hear from the dialogue and workgroup discussions described above.